

Transparency is a vital part of our vibrant and enduring democracy. In order to encourage the government to be more accountable to its people, information from federal government agencies has been available to the public through the Freedom of Information Act for over 40 years.

All federal agencies are required to disclose records upon receiving a written request unless the information requested is protected from disclosure under one of the nine exemptions. To find out more about the process of composing and submitting a written request, and about the nine exemptions, click here to view the brochure “[Your Right to Federal Records](#) .”

There is no single agency that handles Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. All requests for information should be submitted directly to the agency responsible for that material. Requests must be in writing and comply with specific agency requirements. They must describe, in as much detail as possible, the information you seek. Many agencies now accept requests via email, web form and fax.

In addition, federal agencies are required to release certain information automatically. Please check the agency’s website for this material. For contact information to submit requests to federal agencies, for links to agency websites to check for automatically released material, and for specific agency requirements for requests, [click here](#) .

Please note that agencies are not required to do any additional research for you, analyze data or create records in response to your request. Not all segments of the federal government release information under the FOIA. Information from the Supreme Court and federal courts, from certain White House offices and from Congress is not available.

Information from California state agencies is available to you under the California Public Records Act. It is not required that these requests be submitted in writing. For more information regarding making a request under this Act, please [click here](#) and [click here](#) .

If you find that your questions are not answered here, please do not hesitate to contact my office. In the event you find yourself having a problem with a federal agency and require assistance, please fill out and sign a [privacy release form](#) .

HELPFUL LINKS

- [Californians Aware Guide to California Public Records Act Requests](#)

- [Federal Agency Contact Information](#)
- [First Amendment Project Guide to California Public Records Act](#)
- [Freedom of Information Act Website](#)
- [Your Right to Federal Records Brochure](#)

FAQs

- [What information can I request under the Freedom of Information Act?](#)
- [How is a FOIA request processed?](#)
- [How long will it take for my request to be answered?](#)
- [Do I have to pay to make a request?](#)
- [How do I request information on myself?](#)